THE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT OF OLD NEW YORK

1790 - 1866

Americana Review

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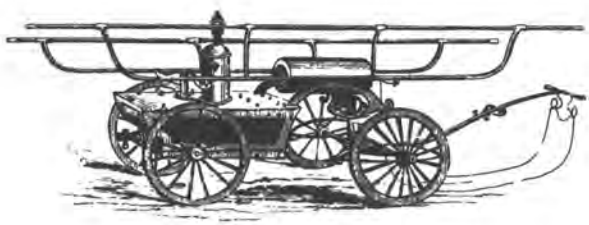

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JAMES GULICK.

THE OLD NEW YORK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT.

I.

THE romance of the earlier days of the city of New York is largely and closely associated with the heroism and hilarity of the members of its old Volunteer Fire Department, and is precisely the material for a stirring chapter of American folk-lore. Although that illustrious organization has been disbanded only fifteen years, its deeds of gallantry are already fast passing into the realm of fable. It was but yesterday that I heard a story of an old fireman who, when asked to "step up and take a drink," would accept the invitation, walk straight to the bar, call for two glasses of liquor, and empty them into his boots. The inference, of course, was that he belonged to a species of teetotaler that disdained to put ardent spirits where most men who use them put them. But a little investigation disclosed the fact that it was once very common for New York firemen in

ZOPHAR MILLS.

winter to keep their feet from freezing by pouring rum, brandy, or whiskey into their boots. Many a member of the old Volunteer Fire Department had his feet frozen repeatedly in the discharge of his duties. Mr. Zophar Mills, for example, foreman of Engine No. 13, went home several times with frozen feet, ears, and hands; on one occasion he was unable to turn the knob of his front door, and was compelled to ask the help of a passer-by. At the great fire in 1835, which began at nine o'clock on the night of the 16th of December, and continued until four o'clock of the next afternoon, destroying property of the value of $20,000,000, the thermometer indicated seven degrees below zero, and the sight-seers walked about muffled with blankets that had been dragged in bales from the dry-goods stores. Mr. Charles Forrester, foreman of Engine No. 33, asserts that the winters nowadays are unquestionably much less severe than they were thirty years ago: so that putting liquor in one's boots turns out to be an old recipe for keeping the feet from freezing. It would be easy to enumerate other signs of the advent of the myth period, and any person who proposes to write the history of the old Volunteer Fire Department of the city of New York—and few histories are better worth the writing — must needs bestir himself if he wishes to tell the facts, especially since, if he is at all familiar with his subject, he will recognize in it several explicit reasons why the charming story of the old firemen's exploits has a natural affinity for the fabulist.

II.

A sufficiently convenient way of obtaining a bird's-eye view of the subject is to listen to two short recitals from the lips of living firemen who were prominent during the good old days of the department. Let them speak without preface. "The pride and ambition of each fire company," says Mr. Zophar Mills, "were to be the first to reach a fire, and the most efficient in putting it out. We had as much love for that as we possibly could have for anything else. We would leave our business, our dinner, our anything, and rush for the engine. The night I was getting married there was a fire. I could see it, and I wanted to go immediately. But the next morning early, before breakfast, there was another fire, and I went to that. So you may judge how we liked it. If we had a parade, we paid the expenses ourselves. We always paid for the painting, repairing, and decorating of our engines. Engine No. 13, to which I belonged, was silver-plated—the first that was so—at a cost of perhaps $2000. We didn't ask the corporation to foot the bill. I kept an account of my expenses in connection with the Fire Department, and I found that in seven years I had paid, in charity, in

clothing, and in incidentals, $3000. Mr. W. L. Jenkins, president of the Bank of America, was a member of Engine Company No. 13. Many of its other members were Quakers. There were few 'roughs' then, as in modern times. Nor were there any salaries, except in the case of the Chief Engineer, and temporarily of the assistant engineers. Firemen now are liberally compensated; they get $1200 a year each, and are retired on half-pay, if infirm, after ten years' service. Many and many a time have I worked my breath out while pumping old Thirteen, and lain in the street, and jumped up again and seized the brakes, because there was no one to take my place. The city was not then divided into districts. I once went from this very building [in Front Street, near Wall] to Astoria, in 1841, and saved four frame buildings whose roofs were already burned off. When the alarm sounded I thought the fire was somewhere up the Bowery. I ran nearly all the way to the Hell Gate Ferry at Eighty-sixth Street, and then crossed the river.

"At a fire in Haydock's drug store, in Pearl Street, near Fulton, on the 1st of July, 1834, I had a narrow escape. The building was high, and all of it above the second story was consumed, leaving only the gable walls standing. Several firemen, after the flames had been extinguished, were ordered to take their hose up to the second story, and play upon the débris, in order to prevent sparks from flying about, and fire from smouldering. As I stood there, at six o'clock in the morning, with two or three of my men, I suddenly saw one of the high gable walls spread out like a blanket, and coming down upon us. My only chance was to turn my back and take it; there was no time to run. I was knocked flat, of course, by the falling mass of brick, and was forced through the second-story floor, and also through the first-story floor, into the cellar. I remember raising myself on my elbows, and then getting up and walking out, after having gone through two floors with that wall on top of me. Why didn't it kill me? I don't know. It was Providence—a miracle. Eugene Underhill and Frederick A. Ward, who

GREAT FIRE, DECEMBER 16 AND 17, 1835.

THE RUINS.—"TAKE UP: MAN YOUR ROPE."—[AFTER LITHOGRAPH PUBLISHED BY CURRIER AND IVES, 1854.]

stood a few feet from me, and were holding the hose-pipe, were instantly killed. John T. Hall and William Phillips, two other firemen on the same floor, jumped out of a window, and one of them landed upon a fence, and was badly injured. I wore a tin trumpet swung across my back, and my flesh in consequence was black and blue for six months. My cap was not dug out of the cellar until evening. The former foreman of Thirteen, who was on the second story, advising us, was buried standing up to his neck in hot bricks—so hot as to burn off some of his toes, and a brick's length off the calf of his leg. In consideration of his misfortune he was made the first fire-bell ringer of the City Hall. He lived for thirty years after that. Chief Engineer Gulick displayed great presence of mind in the emergency. His first order was to Engine No. 17, which was working near the fire, to take off the tail-screw, let the water out of the box, and then pump air into the ruins. The men were digging all day for their buried comrades, and for the bodies of poor Underhill and Ward, who stood not fifteen feet away from me when the wall fell without warning. We were playing 'washing down,' as we called it, the object being thoroughly to put out the fire that lingered in the straw, cotton, and so on. We considered that the fire was pretty much out, and were only giving a few finishing touches. 'Thirteen' afterward erected a marble monument to Underhill and Ward in the cemetery in Carmine Street, opposite Varick. On one side is the inscription [Mr. Mills brought out his manuscript copy, and read]:

'Here are interred
the Bodies of
EUGENE UNDERHILL,
aged 20 years, 7 months, and 9 days,
and
FREDERICK A. WARD,
aged 22 years, 1 month, and 16 days,
who lost their lives by the falling of a building
while engaged
in the discharge of their duty as Firemen,
on the first day of July,
MDCCCXXXIV.'

On another side are the words:

'This Monument is Erected
By the Members of
Eagle Fire Engine Company,
No. 13,
in connection with the Friends of the
Deceased,
to commemorate the sad event
connected with their Death,
and the Loss
which they deplore.'

This monument can be seen there now.

"At a fire at Nos. 142 and 144 Front Street, in 1833, where my office is now,

the building was burned, the walls being left standing. On the De Peyster Street side there was a stairway leading up to the rear of the second story. A fireman stood at the head of these stairs, and held a pipe that played upon the smoking ruins. Suddenly the wall began to fall over into De Peyster Street. The fireman ran down the stairs and under the wall, and was crushed to death. But, wonderful to relate, another fireman, a member of Thirteen, Charles Miller by name, who was standing with his back against the wall, and who kept his position, was saved. The falling wall broke off at about fifteen feet above him, and dashed into the street in front of him, leaving him unhurt. He was standing there to keep warm: it was about three o'clock in the morning, drizzling and cold. People generally would not believe such a story as this, but it is as true as gospel. The shock affected Miller for months. It completely unnerved him. He was in a constant tremor. I knew him well, but haven't seen or heard of him these twenty years. He was in the leather business in 'the Swamp.' Our foreman then was William S. Moore, a grocer in Front Street, near Peck Slip—a very nice man of Quaker parentage. He is dead now.

"Still another time," continued Mr. Mills, "I was carried under. At the Jennings's clothing-store fire on Broadway, near Barclay Street, in the year 1854, where eleven firemen were killed, I was on the roof of an extension to the main building. I was not a fireman then, but an exempt, and had gone there to help the men get the hose up. As I was returning to the street, and had got half way down the ladder between the roof and the second story, the rear wall of the main building fell over upon the extension, carrying down perhaps twenty-five by forty feet of it. I went down with it, ladder and all, into the cellar, through two floors. You wouldn't think it possible for a man to live after going through such an experience as that. While clambering to get out I felt a man's thigh as distinctly as possible; the poor fellow was dead, I suppose. Finally I succeeded in climbing to the level of the first floor, and walked through the store into the street by the front door. The first man I saw was Matsell, Chief of Police. I had lost my cap, and the foreman of No. 42 said, 'Come around with me and I will get you a cap.' While I was gone more of the wall fell, and killed several firemen who were trying to rescue the others from the ruins. I shouldn't want to go through that again."

III.

This experience is typical, and every old fireman will recognize it as such. Typical also is the experience of Mr. Charles Forrester:

"I never lost a day in my business. Often I was out with my engine four nights in the week, yet I was at work as usual in the morning. In those earlier times—say previous to 1836—the city was not districted, and whenever there was a fire anywhere all the engines were out in a jiffy. The excitement kept us up, I suppose. One night my company went up as far as Fifty-third Street and Fourth Avenue. Another night I was sitting at home with a bad cold, and taking a vapor bath. The fire-bell rang; I threw off my blankets, and though in a dripping perspiration, ran with the engine up to Forty-second Street and Tenth Avenue. The next morning I never felt better. I was fit to run for my life. What was the inducement? Well, the love of excitement, and of excelling the rival companies. We were fully repaid when we could brag about our exploits, and make our neighbors feel jealous. The only compensation that the law allowed us was release from military and jury duty. But how cold the winters were! Six or seven feet of snow in Beekman Street in 1836, at the fire in the cabinet-maker's shop! Outside, the building was coated with ice and icicles; inside, it was a raging furnace. We ran our engine on runners—simple runners made of planking six inches wide and sixteen feet long, with the ends turned up. We had steamed the ends and turned them up ourselves. On these runners, planed smooth on the bottom, we placed the engine, wheels and all, screwing the wheels down to them by the aid of simple clamps over the rims. Four men could pull the engine easily on these runners, though it weighed three thousand pounds. We would roll her out from the engine-house across the pavement to the street on broomsticks. Everything was cheap and effectual in those days. I suppose that now hundreds of dollars would be expended to do what we did with so many cents then. In front of the house of Jonathan Thompson (late Collector of the Port of New York), at No. 83 Beek-

CHARLES FORRESTER.

man Street, there was a tunnel through the snow. Oh, we don't have any such winters now! The charm of it all lay in the excitement of the running, in the victory over rivals, and in the daring feats in and about burning buildings. Many men lost their lives. There, for instance, was the great fire in West Street, near the Battery, in 1841 or 1842, the worst I ever knew. I was an engineer at that time, and had two streams, one from Engine 33, and the other from Hose 13, playing up the hatchway of the building; but the water came back upon us so scalding hot that it was like cards of needles in our backs every time it struck us. At length Chief Anderson ordered me to back the men out, and go to the rear of the building, to prevent the fire from getting into Washington Street. His plan always was, 'If the fire is in its infancy, go into the building; if it is well under way, go to the rear, and protect that, for the front will protect itself,' since there are always engines arriving that will help it. When we reached the rear, the floors fell in, and I saw the walls tottering. I ordered my men to drop their hose and run. No. 33 did so, but No. 13 were too proud to lose their hose, and attempted to take it with them. The wall fell, and three of them were crushed, not twenty-five feet from where I stood. A wall of a burning building will totter for a little while, but when it comes, it comes like distress. I always regretted that fire, because I felt that I was the cause of those men s death. Well, if they had obeyed orders, like 33, they wouldn't, any of them, have been caught.

"At a fire in Orange Street, now Baxter Street, Chief Anderson ordered one of his engineers to get a stream upon the burning building from the rear in Mulberry Street. To do so it was necessary to take the hose through the house behind, through a room in which two men were sleeping on two beds. The engineer thought that they were negroes, they looked so tawny. Presently one of his assistants cried out that the sleepers had 'the black small-pox.' The pipe was dropped, the firemen decamped, followed in hot haste by the engineer. They hauled their hose out after them, and they weren't reported for disobeying orders either.

"At the large fire in 1835 a number of engines were present from the neighboring cities, among them the Northern Liberties, of Philadelphia, which reached the scene of the disaster on the second night. The railroad communication was not complete; there was a stretch of six miles in New Jersey, over two sand-hills, where the rails had not been laid. Passengers were accustomed to cover the distance in stage-coaches, but the Philadelphia boys dragged their engine across those sand-hills with unflagging energy. They arrived too late to be of service, but their New York brothers handsomely dined and wined them for their pains.

"At No. 231 Water Street, near Beekman, in 1842, a stove store caught fire on the third floor. I had two streams on the

THE NIGHT ALARM.—"START HER LIVELY, BOYS."—[AFTER LITHOGRAPH PUBLISHED BY CURRIER AND IVES, 1854.]

second floor, and was throwing them up the hatchway. The floor above suddenly gave way, and the weight of the stoves on it carried every staircase down into the cellar. We looked around for means of escape, and found an old sign-board covered with a preparation of smalts—small pieces of broken glass. We put one end of the board on a window-sill, and the other down on a small out-house below, forming a very steep inclination. Then we slid down. Each of us lost the seat of his trousers, and I parted with some flesh besides, so that I didn't sit down for some time afterward.

"At the Buck's Horn Tavern fire, in 1842 or 1843, at the junction of the Boston Post-road and the Bloomingdale Road, near where the Fifth Avenue Hotel now stands, the engines were ordered to form 'a hose line' in order to save the barn. I opened the nearest hydrant, and the next, and the next, but there was no water. They had been building a fountain in Union Square, and had shut the water off. I couldn't get a drop till I got to Fourth Street. Then we began to pump from one engine into another, and so on to the end of the line; but the hose was so leaky that all the water escaped before it reached the fire, all because the Common Council had refused to make an appropriation for new hose. Finally we found a cistern near the barn, and used that.

"At the famous Crystal Palace fire, in 1858, some statuary—figures of the Twelve Apostles, which had been sent from France in the hope that they would be bought for the adornment of a Catholic church in the city—was destroyed. The commissioners of the exhibition had notified the owners to remove them before the fire started, but the latter had neglected to do so. Horace Greeley was one of the commissioners, and not long afterward, while on a visit to Paris, was thrown into Clichy Prison by the owners, who were trying to make him indemnify them for their loss. They never got any money from him, though. I remember Horace well. He used to come down to the post-office to get his newspaper exchanges, and carried them home himself. He was then editor of the *Log-Cabin*, a General Harrison campaign sheet. His shoes had no strings; his trousers caught in them behind; he wore the old white coat which James Gordon Bennett made famous; his hat was on the back of his head; and his neckcloth, when he wore one, showed its knot under his ear. Was it affectation? No; it was carelessness or recklessness. After he got married his wife rather improved him.

"At a fire in Ann Street in 1836, one morning at about sunrise, old Mr. Bennett, who had just opened an office in Clinton Hall, next door to the corner of Beekman and Nassau streets, where the

Nassau Bank now stands, came out upon the front steps, and presented each one of a crowd of two thousand persons or more with a copy of that day's *Morning Herald*. He stood in the open air, and gave a paper to everybody that came. It was a curious sight to see the entire company, seated on curb-stones and stoops, reading the *Morning Herald*. It was the best advertisement he ever had.

"At a fire in Broad Street in 1845, which burned through to Broadway and down almost to Bowling Green, there was an explosion, said to be of several tons of saltpetre, although afterward it was a popular conundrum whether saltpetre would explode at all. Some of Five's men were on the roof of the building. The roof went down, and they walked off unhurt to the pavement. One of them said that the sensation was 'as if the roof had been hoisted up and then squatted down.'

"At a fire in 1812 in Chatham Street hundreds of houses were burned to the ground. A sailor climbed up the steeple of Dr. Spring's Brick Church, which occupied the site of the *Times* Building, went out upon the roof, and extinguished the flames that had just started there. A reward was offered for his feat of valor, but he could never be found. This was considered the greatest fire in New York city up to the conflagration of 1835.

"At a fire which broke out at three o'clock one Sunday morning in March, 1824, in the ship-yard of Adam and Noah Brown, bounded by Stanton, Houston, and Goerck streets and the East River, my engine itself, known as Black Joke, No. 33, was so burned that nothing remained of it but a blackened scrap heap. This engine was the first on the ground. Its odd name was the name of an Albany sloop which, during the Revolutionary war, was transformed into a privateer, and distinguished itself by capturing a number of prizes off the coast of Nova Scotia. In the yard were two steamboats nearly finished, and two ships on the stocks, one of them under cover of the ship-house. Although Black Joke, 33, got to work very expeditiously, the flames spread so rapidly that the firemen were soon driven away from the engine, some of them being compelled to jump into the river in order to save their lives, while others were rescued in a row-boat. An unsuccessful attempt had been made to launch the ships that were on the stocks. Every vessel and all the property in the yard were totally destroyed. This is one of the few instances where a New York fire-engine, taken out to extinguish a fire, was itself extinguished.

"The thermometer stood at more than 100° Fahrenheit one Sunday in July, 1824, when a fire broke out in a rope-walk on Orchard Street, extending into the fields. So intense was the heat that seven firemen died from the effects of it. Mr. Thomas Franklin, then Chief Engineer, father of Mr. Morris Franklin, now president of the New York Life-insurance Company, was seriously affected by the same cause.

"The Bowery Theatre has been burned three times; the first time was in 1828, when it was the finest theatre in New York city, and when Mlle. Celeste, Monsieur and Madame Achilles, Monsieur and Madame Hutin, the first importation of French dancers into this country, were drawing immense houses, and creating extraordinary excitement. Some stables south of the theatre, near Bayard Street, took fire, and the neighboring houses served as a bridge for the flames, which soon attacked the eaves of the theatre, then the roof, and in a short time the interior. For hours the conflagration was beyond the control of the firemen, notwithstanding the presence and activity of every one of the forty-seven engines and nine trucks belonging to the Department, each engine representing forty men. The difficulty of obtaining water was very great. A line was formed of not less than seventeen engines, stretching from the foot of Catherine Street to the burning building, and engaging the services of six hundred and eighty men. The water was pumped from the East River by the first engine in the line, and thence into the second engine, which pumped it into the third, and thence into the fourth, which pumped it into the fifth, and so on. The law then, and until 1835, required each householder to keep in the hall of his house two leather buckets, and to throw them into the street when an alarm of fire was heard in his neighborhood. They were picked up for use by citizens, who put themselves in lines between the fire and the nearest cisterns and pumps, and proceeded to fill the engines as rapidly as possible, passing the buckets from hand to hand. Each bucket was marked with the name and address of its owner, and was returned to him after the fire. When the

THE RACE.—"JUMP HER, BOYS; JUMP HER."—[AFTER LITHOGRAPH PUBLISHED BY CURRIER AND IVES, 1854.]

third fire had burned out the Bowery Theatre, the walls were found to be so fused from successive bakings that each wall seemed to be one immense brick."

IV.

Though the recollections of these old firemen go back fifty or sixty years, they do not reach the epoch when the Volunteer Fire Department was incorporated, much less the more distant period of its origins. The act of incorporation was passed eighty-two years ago, in 1798; and at least as long ago as two hundred and three years there were regular firemen in the city of New York. From certain manuscript and unpublished documents that have come into my possession it appears that the earliest municipal records on the subject are that in January, 1677, "overseers of chimneys and fires were appointed" by the corporation. Six years later, in March, 1683, the first law with respect to the prevention of fires was enacted by the city authorities. This law provided for the appointment of "viewers and searchers of chimneys and firehearths," and inflicted a penalty of twenty shillings for every defect found in the construction of those modest conveniences. It went further. "No person," it said, "shall lay hay or straw or other combustible matter within their dwelling-houses." "A fine of fifteen shillings," it added, shall be imposed "upon every person who shall suffer his chimney to be on fire." It arranged also for the purchase of "hooks, ladders, and buckets." The business of the citizen was to diminish the necessity for firemen. If his chimney caught fire, no matter how, he was fined. He should have had it properly built, and kept it cleaned. A trial of three years showed that these simple and rigorous regulations were insufficient. In 1686, "by reason of great damage done by fire," it was ordered, first, "that every person having two chimneys to his house provide one bucket"; secondly, "that every house having more than two hearths provide two buckets"; and thirdly, "that all brewers shall have six buckets, and all bakers six buckets, under penalty of six shillings for every bucket wanting." The former provision for hooks and ladders seems to have been futile, for in February, 1689, the records show that "fire ladders, with sufficient hooks thereto," were "ordered to be made"; and having gone so far, the city fathers proceeded to appoint "Brandt Meisters," or fire masters, to take charge of the property—another name for the "overseers of chimneys and fires" of the year 1677, with in-

creased scope of operation. When the buckets got lost at a fire, the law-making power was equal to the emergency. "There was complaint," says the town-clerk's book, "of several buckets that were lost at the late fire in the ffly [a market at the foot of Maiden Lane], and it was ordered that the cryer give notice round the city that such buckets be brought to the Mayor." This was in 1692, and the law is known to have been in force for at least a hundred years afterward. When a fire had been put out, the buckets were taken to the front of the City Hall, and were there claimed by the respective owners.

The chimneys in those days bore a bad character. In December, 1697, it is recorded that "this Court, taking into consideration the danger that may happen by fire for want of a due inspection made to cleaning of chimneys and mending of hearths within the city, ordered that two sufficient persons in every ward of this city be appointed as viewers of chimneys and hearths, to view the same once a week; upon finding a defect, to give notice that such be repaired; if a person refuse, he to forfeit the sum of three shillings, one half to the city, the other half to the viewers." Still further we read that "if any person's chimney be on fire after such notice, he shall forfeit the sum of forty shillings; if the viewers neglect to perform their duty, they forfeit the sum of six shillings, and others shall be appointed in their place." This is the first record of a paid Fire Department in the city of New York. "Viewers" and "overseers" there were already; but now arrangement is made for paying, for fining, and for discharging them; and also a systematic performance of duty is required: they are to view the chimneys and hearths once a week. Five years later the constables were pressed into the inspective service: "Constables are ordered to inspect every house, to see whether they have the number of buckets required by law." As the city increased, more hooks and ladders were provided. Twenty-two years after their first appearance it is recorded that in February, 1705, Alderman Vandenburgh was ordered to "be paid nine pounds five shillings for hooks and ladders by him provided"; while in October, 1706, it was "ordered that eight ladders and two fire-hooks and poles be provided, to cost £19 2*s.* 0*d.*"; and in October, 1716, that "a committee be appointed to provide a sufficient number of ladders and hooks for public use"; but no fire-engine seems to have been in operation until fifteen years later, when the Department was fifty-four years old.

On the 6th of May, 1731, it was that the city authorities adopted the following resolution: "*Resolved*, With all convenient speed to procure two complete fire-engines, with suctions and materials thereunto belonging, for the public service; that the sizes thereof be of the fourth and sixth sizes of Mr. Newsham's fire-engines; and that Mr. Mayor, Alderman Cruger, Alderman Rutgers, and Alderman Roosevelt, or any three of them, be a committee to agree with some proper merchant or merchants to send to London for the same by the first conveniency, and report upon what terms the said fire-engines, &c., will be delivered to this corporation." By December of the same year preparations were made for receiving the new apparatus; it was "ordered that workmen be employed to fit up a room in the City Hall [then located where the United States Treasury Building, formerly the Custom-house, now stands] of this city for securing the fire-engines of this corporation, with all expedition." Probably in the same month the engines arrived, for we find it further "ordered that Alderman Hardenbroeck and Mr. Beekman be a committee to have the fire-engines cleaned, and the leathers oiled and put into boxes, that the same may be fit for immediate use." The next month, January, 1733, it was "ordered that a committee employ a person or persons forthwith to put the fire-engines in good order, and also to look after the same, that they may be always in good plight and condition, and fit for present use." Mr. Engs, an old fireman, writes that he distinctly remembers to have seen one of Mr. Newsham's engines, with the maker's name on a brass plate, accompanied by a date, indicating that it was eighty years old. "It had a short oblong square box, with the condenser case in the centre, and was played by short arms at each end, and mounted on four block wheels, made of thick plank. There was no traveller forward for the wheels to play under the box; so that when you turned a corner, the machine must have been lifted around, unless there was a large sweep to move in." Suction pipes were unknown at that

THE FIRE.—"SHAKE HER UP, BOYS."—[AFTER LITHOGRAPH PUBLISHED BY CURRIER AND IVES, 1854.]

time, notwithstanding the fact that the committee had been ordered to obtain, with the engines, "suctions, leather pipes, and caps." The suctions were probably what was known afterward as "pump hose," which led the water from the pump to the engine box; the "leather pipes" were for the same purpose as the ones subsequently made of brass or other metal, and the "caps" were the nozzles.

V.

Such were the origins of the old Volunteer Fire Department. The "room in the City Hall" where the first engine was kept soon became the forerunner of a series of engine-houses; and old firemen tell how, from about the year 1820 until about the year 1836, these buildings were places of orderly rendezvous in the evenings. Tweedism was not rampant in those days. Except on Saturday nights, the boys went home as early as 10 P.M., and went to bed. They did not "bunk" with the "machine." Singing and story-telling were the chief entertainments. There was no drinking, no eating, no sleeping, no misbehavior. Even smoking and "chewing" seem to have been finable offenses in some houses; for a few days ago, while consulting the minutes of Engine Company No. 13—an organization, however, exceptionally select and efficient—I found these curious entries:

"*December* 1, 1829.—Charles J. Hubbs reports D. T. Williams for chewing tobacco in the engine-house."

"*December* 3, 1829.—William M. Haydock reports Washington Van Wyck for smoking in the engine-house."

Liquor, however, was allowed at fires, when the men were in actual service, provision for a regular supply of it having been made by the same engine company as early as the year 1801, when the following *naïve* minute was entered on the books:

"*Berkley's Tavern, November* 12, 1801.—It being thought by the company that a steward to the company be necessary, whose business it shall be to furnish the company with liquor, &c., at the times of fire, and when it will be paid for by the company; any other member than the person above appointed finding liquors, &c., at time of fire, will do it at his own expense, as the company will not pay the same."

This provision obviated the necessity for the repetition of such entries as these:

"*November* 9, 1792.—Eighteen shillings paid to Elias Stillwell for gin at the time of the fire at the Fly Market."

"*November* 17, 1795.—Paid six shillings for Geneva had at fires, and carting sled."

"*December* 3, 1795.—This morning, between eight and nine o'clock, a most dreadful fire happened in William Street, between John Street and the North Church, in which six or seven houses were consumed.....Paid six shillings for gin."

As time wore on it became the custom to use the engine-houses as dormitories, and demoralization went hand in hand with it. The law, however, still forbade the practice, and Mr. "Joe" Hoxie one night signified his accession to the office of alderman by making a general raid upon the buildings and ordering all hands out. Engine Company No. 33 thereupon made friends with the sexton of All Saints' Episcopal Chapel (now used as a machine shop), in Grand Street, near Pitt, the members lying in the pews, and using the ends of the cushions for bolsters. When turned out of this comfortable nest, they hired the second story of a house in Scammel Street, near by, only a hundred and fifty feet from their engine-house, and paid for it themselves, disdaining to modernize themselves by calling upon the city to meet the expense. They had two rooms, and these they fitted up with three rows of berths, or "bunks," along the walls, one row above another. "I was so long," says an old fireman, "that my feet hung over the end of my bunk, and the fellow who slept below me used to amuse himself by sticking pins into my bare soles." Often a member who happened to be wakeful would go to the signal lantern, which was a part of the fixtures of the establishment, scrape out of it a handful of lamp-black, and proceed to paint mustaches on the upper lips of the smooth-faced slumberers, who, when they awoke—it might have been a fire-alarm that roused them—would try to wipe the nasty stuff off, thereby making their appearance considerably worse, for the lamp-black would stick like a brother. "I have worn such mustaches many a time," continued the speaker. "All such harmless little performances made fun enough then, though they look rather silly now." There were thirty "bunks" in the Scammel Street lodging-house.

By-and-by the tastes of the firemen became less simple, and brown-stone houses were not uncommon. Harry Howard was the first Chief Engineer who openly encouraged the men to sleep in these buildings. Among the finest houses in earlier days were those of No. 13, in Duane Street; No. 6, in Henry Street, near Gouverneur (which is still standing, and is used by a steam-engine company; No. 44, in Houston Street, near Columbia, now occupied by a steam-engine; and No. 32, in Hester Street. About the year 1849 the late Mr. Tweed became foreman of Engine No. 6, most of whose members were ship-carpenters and calkers in the Seventh Ward. He was instrumental in erecting for them a fine three-story building, large enough for a ward meeting, and practically the political head-quarters of that part of the city, which excited the envy of other companies less sumptuously provided for by the corporation. Mr. Mills relates that when he belonged to Engine No. 13 there was not room enough in her house for the men to sit down. "We used to drag our engine out when we wanted to hold a meeting of the company."

VI.

It was at "a convivial party," on a winter evening in 1792, at a small tavern in Nassau Street, near Fair (now Fulton) Street, that some members of the Volunteer Fire Department first bestirred themselves with reference to the creation of a fund for the benefit of indigent and disabled firemen and their families. The building was long ago torn down, and on its site is a magnificent marble structure owned by ex-Mayor Wood; its frequenters also have long since disappeared, but their good deed has built for them a name. Six years afterward matters had taken very definite shape and finish; and when, on the 20th of March, 1798, an act "to incorporate the firemen of the city of New York" was passed by the Legislature, one of its provisions was, "that the funds of the said corporation which shall arise from chimney fires, certificates, and donations, and from such other objects as may have been heretofore or may be hereafter agreed on by the respective fire-companies, shall be appropriated to the relief of such indigent or disabled firemen, or their families, as may be interested therein, and who may, in the opinion of a majority of the trustees, be worthy of assistance; but if they shall amount to a greater sum than the trustees may think necessary to apply to the said purposes, then the said representatives shall have power to apply such

surplus to the purpose of extinguishing fires, under such limitations and restrictions as they may, with the sanction of the corporation of the city of New York, deem proper." For thirty-seven years the course of the charity ran smooth. The recipients of the fund were few, and the disbursements small. What better use of the principal than to invest it in fire-insurance stock? The idea found favor, and the investment was made. Whenever thereafter the firemen put out a fire, or prevented the destruction of property, they added to the value of their charitable stock. The better they worked, the more money they had for their widows and orphans. Every dollar saved to the fire-insurance companies was a gain for the fund. But the disastrous conflagration of the year 1835 nearly swept the insurance companies from existence, and in their fall the fund also declined. It became, indeed, scarcely a fund at all. With admirable promptness and energy the trustees set themselves to the task of soliciting subscriptions for the purpose of putting the charity on its feet again, and so successful were they and their friends that in a few weeks the sum of $24,000 was secured. Tradition has not failed to embalm with especial care the names of Adam W. Spies, of Engine No. 12, and James Russell, of Hose No. 4, who distinguished themselves by their zeal in the work. Once started again, the fund moved without apparent friction. "In those days," says Mr. Giles, its present treasurer, "it was a rare occurrence for a fireman to ask relief from the fund. It seemed as if they felt unwilling, however great were their necessities, to seek assistance from a source which they thought should be reserved as a sacred trust for the benefit of widows and orphans only." Thirteen years afterward, however, in 1848, another crisis was reached. The trustees, in their annual report, regretted to state that "for three years past they have not only been unable to add anything to the permanent fund, but have experienced great difficulty in raising sufficient money to meet their actual and necessary expenditures." The principal causes of the deficiency were the great increase in the number of the widows, orphans, and other beneficiaries; the decreased sums collected from chimney and gunpowder fines, and from penalties for violating the fire laws; and the neglect or inability of the city fire-insurance companies, which had suffered terrible losses, to contribute as liberally as had been their custom. The first-mentioned cause was the chief. The city had been growing rapidly, and the number of firemen had in consequence increased from five or six hundred to about two thousand. The condition of affairs was earnestly considered at a special meeting convened for the purpose, and each member promised "to use his best efforts to find some new source of revenue to sustain the sinking fortunes of the fund." It did not take long to discover that not less than twenty-one foreign insurance agencies were neglecting to pay to the Comptroller of the State, as required by law, two per cent. of the premiums received on policies of insurance issued by them. The law was clear; the neglect was inexcusable. Why not get the Legislature to make over to the fund this levy of two per cent.? asked the trustees one of another, and the reply being in favor of such a course, a bill was forthwith drawn, "praying the Legislature to transfer the two per cent. tax from the coffers of the State to the charitable fund of the Fire Department." A delegation of the board, accompanied by other of its friends, proceeded at once to Albany, and the bill was introduced, but on account of the lateness of the season it was not reached before the Legislature adjourned. The next winter the bill was again presented —this time early. Its friends "were met by a powerful lobby of foreign insurance agents and their friends, to defeat, if possible, its passage. Finding that we were determined to have the bill passed," continues Mr. Giles, "they proposed a conference, and offered, if we would withdraw our bill, or would not press its passage, to give to the Fire Department Fund annually $1500 so long as the Volunteer Fire Department existed. We informed them that we could not comply with their request, as our instructions were to get the bill passed; and that if we were unsuccessful we would return to the representatives of the Fire Department with the proud assurance that we had done our duty and obeyed our instructions. But by means of great exertions we were successful, the bill was passed, and we returned to our constituents, the representatives of the Fire Department, with a certified copy of the law in our pockets." The books show that during the next fif-

teen years the passage of this law benefited the fund to the amount of more than $200,000.

When the volunteer system was succeeded by a paid Fire Department, the opponents of the former, having gained, says Mr. Giles, the object for which they went to Albany, "turned their attention to this charitable fund; and so anxious were they to blot out and destroy every nucleus that the Volunteer Department might rally around that they were disposed to make the trustees of the paid Department the sole arbiters of this charity, with power to fill vacancies in their board." But at length the Legislature enacted that to the Exempt Firemen should be confided the trust, with the proviso that no money should be taken from the permanent fund without the consent of the Legislature. This fund at that time was $90,000. Last year it had increased to $129,307 89.

"The present paid Fire Department," however, says Mr. Zophar Mills, "have a fund of their own of about $400,000, obtained from fines and penalties for violating the building laws, through licenses for selling petroleum, fire-works, etc. The interest on this sum is twice as much as the Department spends for its widows, orphans, and infirm members. We were eighty years in collecting our fund, they only fifteen years. Five years ago they received one-third of our revenues, three years ago one-half, but about a year ago the law was changed so as to give the whole back to us. They didn't need the money, but they knew that we did; yet it is a wonder that they consented to give it up." The fund of the old Volunteer Department now yields yearly the sum of $40,000. It is one of the most modest, efficient, and praiseworthy charities in the world.

VII.

A principal source of its revenue was the "Annual Ball for the Benefit of the New York Fire Department Fund." Almost every engine company had an annual ball, but the ball of the season was the general ball for the fund. It occupied for many years a position corresponding to that of the Charity Ball in the Academy of Music, and enlisted the sympathy and support of the fashion and wealth of the metropolis. The first ball of the series was held in the Bowery Theatre in the year 1828, not long before the burning of that building. The price of tickets was two dollars; afterward it was never less than five dollars. Great care was taken in the distribution of tickets, that the entertainment should be as select as possible. The places of assembly in succeeding years were the Park Theatre, on Park Row, the Opera-house (Clinton Hall), Niblo's, and the Academy of Music, and the success was perfect, until the disbandment of the Department in 1865, when the interest began to diminish, and the difficulty of paying expenses to begin. The last entertainment given by the "Firemen's Ball Committee of the Old Volunteer Fire Department" was not a ball, but a concert, in aid of the yellow-fever sufferers, held in the Academy of Music on the 2d of October, 1878, and resulting in the collection of the handsome net sum of $5462. In the palmy period of the Department immense preparations were made for the decoration of the building in which the ball was to take place. For several days previous to the event wagons laden with trumpets, torches, hooks, ladders, axes, tormentors, and other implements of the craft might be seen driving up to the head-quarters of the Chief Engineer, at No. 21 Elizabeth Street, and depositing their treasures, so that as soon as the theatre was available all the material for ornamenting it might be within reach for expeditious use. When the curtain dropped on the stage the night before the ball, the firemen took possession of the building, and their labors in equipping its interior continued through the night and the next day. Enthusiasm, diligence, and quick intelligence presided over the task of preparation. The tickets were handsomely engraved on steel.

The preparations for the balls given by the several companies were scarcely less notable. Fine "fancy" paper with ornamented cut margins was not considered too choice, nor gilt ink too costly, nor "politest" phrases too precious.

It is almost needless to add that at a firemen's ball the dancing ceased only with the break of day.

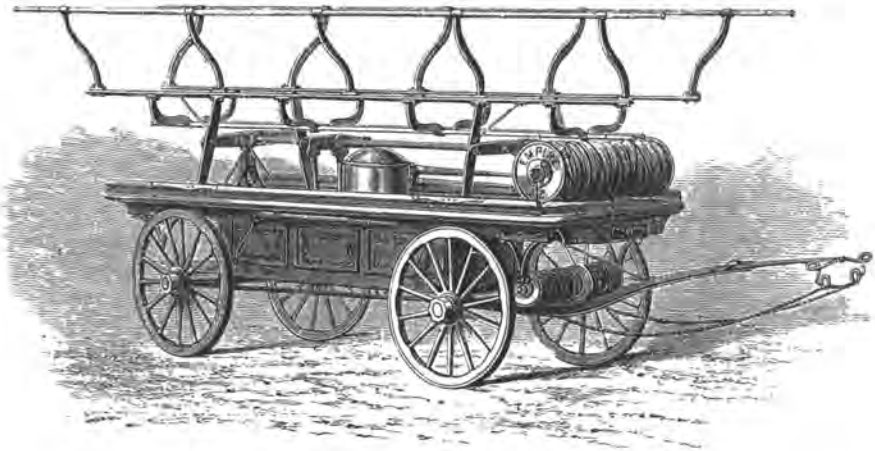
VIII.

On one memorable occasion the labors of the New York firemen were exerted with triumphant success in Brooklyn also. In the latter city, a few blocks west of Fulton Street, near Fulton Ferry, in 1842, a fire started, burned through to Fulton

Street, crossed that street, and destroyed the houses on each side of it for a considerable distance. The Chief Engineer, in view of the extent and ferocity of the flames, was about to dispatch a messenger to the Navy-yard requesting the authorities to detail an officer for the purpose of blowing up a row of brick buildings as the only means of staying the progress of the fire. It so happened that near the Brooklyn Chief Engineer was Chief Engineer Anderson, of the New York Fire Department, and Engineer Charles Forrester. These officers urged the Brooklyn Chief to withhold the request to the Navy Department, and promised to bring over from New York a force sufficient to save the doomed buildings and extinguish the fire. The offer was gladly accepted, and Engineer Charles Forrester started for New York, bearing an order from Chief Anderson to have the City Hall bell strike five—the signal for calling out the engines in the district southeast of the City Hall Park. With characteristic forethought, Mr. Forrester got the ferry-master on the New York side to promise to keep the boat in the slip until it could be packed with engines and firemen from New York. The ferry-boats then ran less often than now. He started the Fulton Market bell, and next the City Hall bell was heard. This was responded to successively by the bells in the North Dutch tower and the old Brick Church tower. In an incredibly short time the ferry was a rendezvous of engines and firemen, the river was crossed, and a line of engines was formed from the Brooklyn side of the river, Engine No. 15 being at the dock, Engine No. 22 next, Engine No. 42 next, and Engine No. 38 next. The fire was conquered, and the row of brick buildings saved.

The Exempt Engine Company was composed of firemen who had served their time and been honorably discharged. It was called out only in extraordinary emergencies. During the war riots in 1863 many of its members staid in the *Tribune* Building for several days and nights, ready to perform duty at a moment's notice; and perilous duty it was, when the rioters, who had set fire to private houses and orphan asylums, determined that these should be consumed. At the burning of Barnum's Museum, on Broadway, where the *Herald* Building now stands, the Exempt Engine Company is believed to have saved a quarter of a million of dollars. It had three engines —one of them a hand-engine known as the "Hay-Wagon," and the others steam-engines, which were self-propellers, each manned by ten Exempts, who did the work of five hundred firemen and an ordinary engine. These, with the exception of the one used by Engine Company No. 8, were the first efficient steam-engines in New York city. The "Hay-Wagon" was sold to the United States government about the year 1862, and taken to Fortress Monroe for the protection of that important place when the rebels were thought to be meditating the capture and burning of it. Mr. John Baulch, an assistant engineer of the New York Fire Department, went with the "Hay-Wagon" to Fortress Monroe, entered the service of the government, and staid there, performing "fire duty." The "Hay-Wagon," an engraving of which accompanies this article, was originally the engine of Empire Company, No. 42, but being extremely heavy and lumbersome, was abandoned by that organization for a new one. The Exempts think-

CORNELIUS V. ANDERSON.



THE "HAY-WAGON."—EMPIRE ENGINE, NO. 42.

ing that she was too good a servant to be discharged, resolved to form a company of their own, and take her into their service. A good specimen of a "double-decker" engine is seen in the reproduction of the Southwark Engine, No. 38, which was the first machine of the kind in use in New York city.

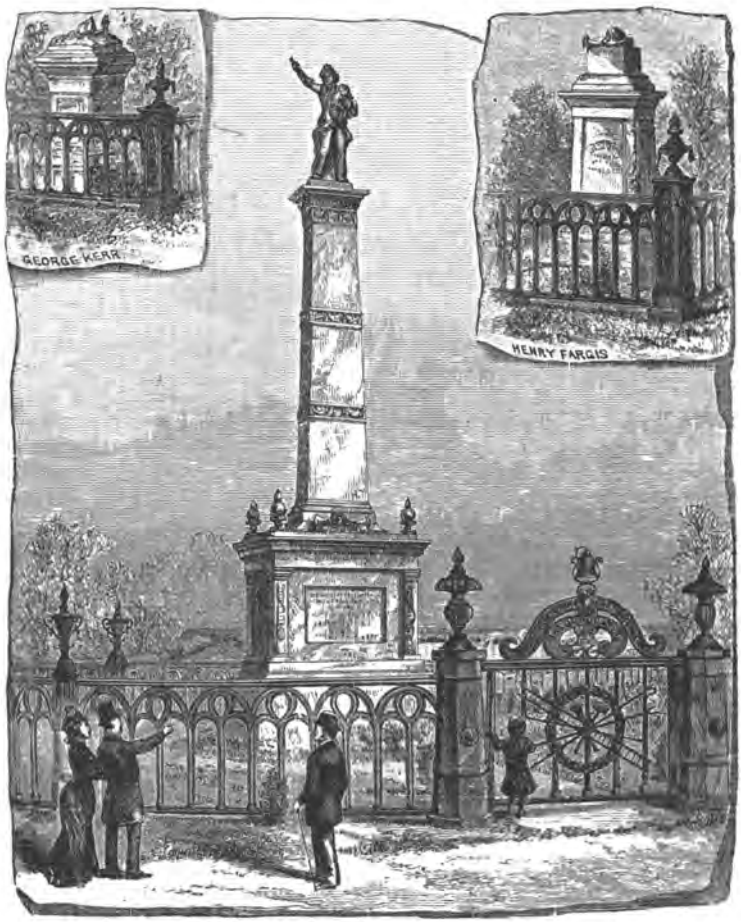
IX.

A few months ago—or, to be precise, on the 18th of June, 1880—there appeared in the New York *Evening Post* a short letter, signed "C. J.," which began as follows: "Over in Greenwood there is a stately monument to the New York fireman who lost his life in saving a child. It is the only one in that city of the dead before which I take off my hat." I do not know the name of the writer, but his sentiments are chivalrous. The occasion of the first purchase of lots in Greenwood Cemetery for the burial of firemen was the gallant deaths of Engineer George Kerr and Assistant-Foreman Henry Fargis, of the Southwark Engine Company, No. 38, at the fire in Duane Street, New York, on the 2d of April, 1848. These sad events made a deep impression upon the hearts of New York firemen, and led them to a resolution to honor in an especial manner the memory of their brave associates. A committee, consisting of Cornelius V. Anderson, George A. Buckingham, Lawrence Turnure, George W. Littell, John K. Bowen, Warren Bliven, James W. Barker, Furman Neefus, John A. Cregier, and Charles McDougall, was intrusted with the business on the 2d of May, 1848.

SOUTHWARK ENGINE, NO. 38.

These old firemen entered (to quote their own words) upon "the performance of the duties assigned them with a melancholy pleasure—melancholy in the recollection of the events which prompted this movement on your [the Fire Department's] part, but, at the same time, pleasant in the reflection that though dead in body, the virtues and excellency of character of your late associates still live in your memory, and that the remembrance of them will thus be perpetuated to your posterity." They proceeded at once to visit Greenwood Cemetery, in order to select a suitable site for the erection of a monument. The comptroller of the Cemetery Association, Mr. J. A. Perry, lent them his help, and, after a careful inspection of the grounds, they chose a spot—now well known to so many thousands of Americans and foreigners—"which for its natural scenery, commanding view of the bay and surrounding country, can not be surpassed." So, at all events, they reported to the Fire Department, and probably their judgment will not be questioned by anybody who has seen the beautiful place on Summit Avenue, in the southern part of that fair city of the dead.

The ground being secured, a magnificent monument, designed and built by Mr. Robert E. Launitz, was erected, at an expense of $2500. Who does not recall the leading features of this splendid memorial and this enchanting spot? The white marble shaft with its pedestal is twenty-three feet ten inches high, and is surmounted by a statue four feet eight



MONUMENT AT GREENWOOD.

inches high—the statue of a fireman in the act of saving a child from the flames. The shaft consists of three plain blocks, relieved by festoons of oak leaves—the emblem of strength and endurance. The pedestal is of notable design. Its base block bears the coat of arms of the city of New York, whose firemen are to be commemorated; its pilasters are adorned with tastefully grouped hydrants, hose, hooks, and ladders, the hose companies as well as the engine companies having a share in the memorial work. Above the cornice a fireman's cap and two speaking-trumpets repose on a cushion. The wreath of oak leaves that surrounds the cap is the historic emblem that the wearer has saved a citizen's life. Firemen's torches, ornamented with leaves of water plants, rise from each corner of the cornice. The general effect of the structure is exceedingly impressive.

This is the Firemen's Monument, and on its right the engineers of the Department have erected a special memorial in honor of their late associate George Kerr, while on its left rises a similar tribute to the memory of Henry Fargis, reared by the company of which he was a member. With characteristic generosity the deed of the lot on which the Kerr monument stands was made out in the name of a representative of his family, a similar course being pursued in the case of the Fargis monument. The entire ground is inclosed by a substantial and choice iron railing, the pedestals for which represent hydrants surmounted by an urn. The gate, also of iron, is composed of hose-pipes crossed by a hook, a ladder, a torch, an axe, a trumpet, and a tormentor—all of them firemen's instruments—bound together by a length of hose, and encircled by a laurel wreath. Over the gate is a scroll inscribed with the words, "New York Fire Department, incorporated A.D. 1798," and above the scroll is a bell. The cost of the railing and gate was $982 75. The entire cost of the monument and its inclosure was $4316 46, every cent of which was paid by New York volunteer firemen.

Peaceful and honored has been the sleep of the brave men who lie beneath the sward of that lovely place. On the 12th of June, 1849, the bodies of Engineer Kerr and Assistant Foreman Fargis were laid there, and it was the intention to do the same with the bodies of all New York firemen who had been killed in the discharge of their duties; but it is a curious fact that when search was made for their graves in various burial-grounds, it was found impossible to identify them, except in two instances, namely, those of Messrs. Underhill and Ward (the story of their death has already been told), whose friends were unwilling to have the removal made unless the monuments already erected over their graves were transferred to the plot in Greenwood. This the committee could not consent to do, and the whole plan was abandoned.

Messrs. Kerr and Fargis, it may be added, were killed by the falling of a wall. Chief Engineer Anderson, in a communication to the Common Council of the city of New York a few days after the fire, eulogized his dead associates in the warmest terms.

Several attempts, in addition to the first one, were made to have the bodies of Underhill and Ward removed to Greenwood Cemetery, but the disinclination of the Trustees of the Exempt Firemen's Benevolent Fund, who have control of the firemen's plot and monument, to allow the erection of any obstruction to the view, or any unsightliness, prevented the success of the efforts. The trustees persisted in their refusal to permit the monuments now standing in the Carmine Street cemetery to be transferred to the plot in Greenwood. It is not improbable, however, that when in the course of time the former cemetery shall be converted into building lots, the dust of those two brave men will be brought away and deposited near that of their fellows who died in the same cause. After the erection of the Firemen's Monument in Greenwood it was the custom to bury at its feet the bodies of firemen who fell in the discharge of their duty. For sixteen years, or until the disbandment of the Volunteer Fire Department, the custom continued, broken only occasionally by the desire of friends to bury their dead in the family lot. The slumbers of the sleepers are not disturbed now by the advent of new-comers. Nor will they be. The beautiful spot has received its consecration of human dust, and has entered into history. Its area has never been enlarged, its tenants remain in undisturbed possession, and its turf smiles.

FIRE AT JENNINGS'S CLOTHING STORE, BROADWAY, APRIL 25, 1854.

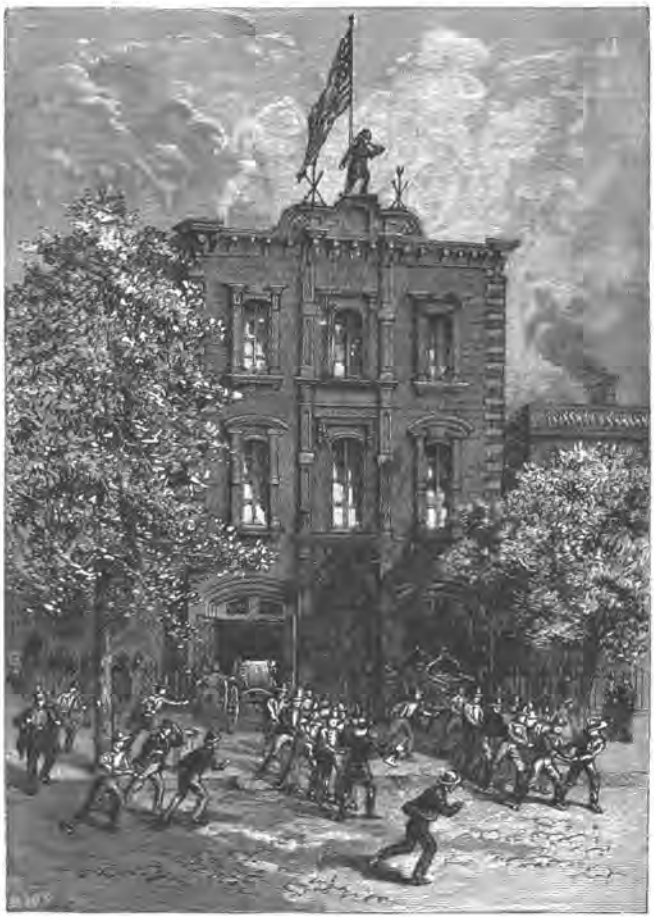
THE OLD NEW YORK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT.

[Second Paper.]

I.

THE symbol of the old Volunteer Fire Department of the city of New York was the figure of a fireman holding in his brawny arms a child whom he had rescued from the flames. It was an emblem not less true than beautiful, yet many an old fireman does not recall a single instance of a comrade's saving anybody's life. Mr. Carlisle Norwood remembers but one case. Mr. Theodore Keeler remembers none at all. Nor does Mr. Peter R. Warner, who adds, however, that "any human being would exert himself to save a fellow-creature's life, and I am sure that if I had gone into a house and saved a woman or child, I should have dismissed the subject from my mind in a month. If a fireman could save life he would do so, and not think much about it afterward." Mr. Michael Eichell, once an engineer in the Department, and for twenty-four years in actual service there, does not remember a single case in which a fireman saved a human life. Mr. Harry Howard, ex-Chief Engineer, says that "firemen often saved lives, but they are too modest to talk about it," yet he remembers only two instances: "J. R. Mount, recently a messenger in the Department of Public Buildings, saved the lives of a woman and child at a fire at No. 89 Bowery, a furniture establishment. The Common Council voted him a silver pitcher as a testimonial. I don't care to speak of myself, but I remember that at the fire in Jennings's clothing store, No. 231 Broadway, after the roof had fallen in and killed thirteen firemen, I heard a boy shouting from the second story, 'Save me! save me!' I went up and found him wedged in, surrounded by a part of the fallen roof, an iron safe, and a wall. Many years afterward, when a rich merchant of San Francisco—his name was S. A. Van Praag—he called at my house, and, as I was out, left his card, inscribed with the words, 'The boy that

you saved from Jennings's fire.'" Mr. John A. Cregier describes Mount's performance as a most heroic act—the most remarkable instance he remembers of a fireman's saving life. The ladder being too short, it was put upon a hogshead, Mount ascended to the fourth floor, helped a woman out of the window and down the ladder—a most difficult feat—and fainted when at last he saw her safe. Another old fireman, who is unwilling to have his name mentioned, says that on the Fourth of July, 1831, he saved a child from a burning building. "Soon after we reached the place with the engine, a mother came rushing down stairs, shrieking that her baby was left behind. I immediately hurried up stairs, took the infant from its cradle on the second floor, descended with it amid considerable smoke, and handed it to her." This old fireman never told the deed to any one but the members of his own family, and he is unwilling at this late day to set up as a hero. His many friends would be surprised if they heard his name. He is one of the most prominent capitalists in the city of New York. In the voluminous manuscript minutes of Engine No. 13, in five large folio volumes, dating back as far as the 9th of November, 1791, and continuing until the 8th of June, 1847, there is not a solitary record of a fireman's saving anybody's life. Of the almost as voluminous manuscript records of Engine No. 21 the same observation is true. After a careful reading of both series of minutes I have failed to find even the mention of such heroism. The minutes of Engine No. 5 and of Engine No. 42 tell the same story so far as I have been able to discover them. Yet the well-known symbol of the fireman with a saved child in his arms which stands in white marble upon the top of the Firemen's Monument in Greenwood Cemetery, which formerly stood over the façade of Firemen's Hall in Mercer Street, and above the entrance



FIREMEN'S HALL.

to Engine No. 2's house in Eldridge Street, and which in varied forms graces the engraved pictures on firemen's certificates and ball tickets, is appropriate in the highest degree. It represents the readiness of brave men to become the saviors of their fellows, and the modesty which in song and story has so often been the accompaniment of valor.

II.

New-Yorkers who recall the many street fights in which firemen were the participants about the time of the disbandment

of the old Volunteer Fire Department need not therefore suppose that the firemen were notoriously disorderly in earlier years. The minutes of the companies previous to the year 1830 are remarkably free from reports of pugilistic encounters. Indeed, the first entry of the kind that has come to the observation of the present writer is dated July 9, 1830, in the books of Engine No. 21, and reads as follows: "A complaint against the riotous conduct of boys from the neighboring engine-houses after alarms of fire, and request that a stop might be put to it," the boys, of course, being not members of the companies, but only "runners" with the engines. The well-kept minutes of Engine No. 13 contain not a line of record of firemen coming to blows with each other until the 12th of June, 1831, when that company was probably at least forty years old. The occasion of the disturbance was a fire in a brick building in Dutch Street, occupied as a bakery by J. and A. Wilson. "We were on the ground in good season," writes the secretary, "and played the first water on the fire from the head of a line from a plug, then from a cistern in the rear, and finally from the river in the watch line, No. 11 at the dock into No. 13, at which place we were *overrun*, and as usual shamefully abused by the members of Engine No. 12, several of our men being struck by them." The words "as usual" do not point, of course, to a notable previous condition of amity between companies Twelve and Thirteen, but this was the first time that anything worth writing down seems to have occurred.

ENGINE AND HOSE LAMP AND LANTERNS.

The two companies were necessarily rivals, No. 13 keeping its engine in Duane Street near William Street, and No. 12 its engine in William Street near Duane, so that whenever a fire alarm sounded, the struggle for precedence on the way to the scene of the conflagration was hot and vigorous. On their way to a fire up town the two engines usually met at the corner of Roosevelt and Pearl streets, and when, as was often the case, the arrival at the hydrant or cistern was almost simultaneous, a conflict was the natural result. These rivals thus came to hate each other most cordially, and a single blow was enough to produce the explosion of a good deal of combustible matter. In like manner Engines Nos. 14 and 5 were rivals, and on their way to an uptown fire would encounter each other in front of the *Tribune* building, and begin the contest for superiority in speed, and for the possession of the desired hydrant, fire-plug, cistern, or dock, as the case might be. Engines 1, 23, and 6, on the

TWEED'S FIRE HAT.

way from their respective houses, would often meet at the corner of Chatham and Pearl streets, and begin their contest, and Engines 40 and 15 at the junction of Centre and Chatham streets, in front of the site now occupied by the *Staats-Zeitung* building. Engines 6 and 8 had many a lusty struggle. "Tweed was foreman of Six Engine then," says an old fireman, "and crowds and crowds of people would congregate at Chatham Square to see 'Big Six' and Eight Engine coming down town. Eight lay in Ludlow Street, and came down Grand, through the Bowery; Six lay in Gouverneur Street, and came through East Broadway, and thence into Chatham Square; and when they met, the excitement was intense and the cheering furious as one or the other engine gained in speed." Engines 41 and 8 also were hearty rivals. All old firemen will recall the contests in which these companies were chronic participants, and will remember, too, how often and how naturally the struggles led to blows. "When did fighting begin, do you ask?" said an old fireman: "it began at the time the Department was organized, in 1798, and earlier, and continued till its disbandment. Two companies would reach simultaneously the same hydrant, for example, and would fight for the possession of it." It was only fighting with fists, though, in the earlier days. There were no pistols, no knives, no maimings, no deaths, as in the period subsequent, say, to the year 1850, when the decline of the Department began.

III.

The old volunteer fireman had a real affection for the "machine," and was fond of recording with pride the instances in which she behaved herself with distinction. "Our engine worked unusually well this morning," wrote the secretary of company Forty-one, on December 15, 1825, "and the members were in fine glee. Forty-one sucked on Twenty-five during the whole time of the Fire, tho' she, Twenty-five, was almost continually overrunning. We gave Twenty-eight a very good supply." On that occasion the fire was in Thompson Street near Broome, and the water was drawn from the North River by means of fourteen engines in line, one engine pumping into another, through two hundred feet of hose. Forty-one Engine pumped out her water faster than Twenty-five Engine could pump it into her, consequently, as the slang was, Forty-one Engine "sucked on" Twenty-five Engine—a result which was considered a grand trophy to the prowess of the men who were pumping Forty-one Engine, and a corresponding disgrace to the men who were pumping Twenty-five En-

FIRE DEPARTMENT BANNER.

gine. Moreover, the engine next below Twenty-five Engine was pumped so vigorously as to give Twenty-five Engine more water than the latter could pump out. Consequently the latter "was almost continually overrunning" her sides, and was still further disgraced thereby.

It is easy to understand the readiness of the volunteer fireman to spend his money on the decoration of his engine. He liked to see her look well. He always spoke of her in the feminine gender. Engine Thirteen was silver-plated at a very great expense, and many minor charges for her ornamentation are entered in the minutes of her company. As early as the year 1825, Forty-one Engine was regularly "washed with fresh water" after doing service at a fire. On December 14, 1829, "a Motion Was made and Carried that the Painting Committee have power to settle with Mr. Effy, the Dutchman, for his design"—probably of a picture painted on the back of the engine, behind her condenser case. It was usual to decorate the backs handsomely. So fond were the firemen of painting their own engines to suit themselves, that the city was in the habit of painting a new engine a temporary dull lead or a gray, and leaving to the company the function of choosing the permanent color, and of paying for putting it on. Not only so, but a "building committee" was often appointed by and from a company to superintend the construction of a new engine. Such a committee appointed by company Thirteen reported on the 8th of November, 1820, how "they have thought it expedient to adopt several improvements which alone can be tested by experience, and hope that time will manifest their utility. For that of the Roller arms—a plan promising great advantage—they must credit their associate Mr. Delano for suggesting. They likewise feel themselves indebted to Mr. G. C. Aycrigg for the piece of ornamental Brass which supports the leader, being a piece of his own device and ingenious workmanship. It eminently contributes to ornament the machine, and they trust the Company will duly appreciate its value." And on the 4th of June, 1823, this company passed a resolution as follows:

"That the body of the Engine be painted Black [with the $90 raised by subscription for the purpose], and the strip of gilding to remain as before, with the addition of a Leaf border."

Six years afterward another engine was obtained from the city by the same company, and decorated, as usual, by themselves, as witness the following entry:

"*Dec.* 2, 1829.—This morning most of the members met at the Corporation Yard for the purpose of taking our new Engine to the House. We rec^{d} her about 11 o'Clock, & from that time until dark we received visitors at the Engine House. Hundreds of persons called in the course of the day, & appeared much pleased with their visit—indeed, for splendor & magnificence, both as regards her Painting, Gilding, Plating, & Carving, she never will probably be equalled."

Who could have doubted it?

Not the engine only, but the engine-house as well, was the object of a pride which recked little of expense.

The funds necessary to meet these constantly recurring expenses of repairing and decorating the engines and engine-houses were provided for in two ways: first, by special subscriptions from the members; and secondly, by fines incurred through violations of the by-laws and constitutions.

A foreigner present at the regular or special business meetings of almost any one of the old volunteer fire companies might have been excused for supposing that a principal function of those organizations was the imposition of fines. The word "fined" occurs on well-nigh every page of the not always very legible documents that describe the festivities of those occasions, the proceeds of the fining being used also to "defray the expenses" of the annual supper, and to provide for the widows and orphans of former members. The by-laws of Clinton Fire Company, No. 41, adopted November 7, 1823, provided that the foreman and assistant foreman should be fined one dollar for each neglect "impartially to enforce all laws that shall be adopted by the company," and that the treasurer should be fined one dollar for each neglect to "render a true statement of the funds when requested by the FOREMAN or ASSISTANT." They established a fine of seventy-five cents for every neglect of a member "to repair after the engine to the fire," when, on arriving at the engine-house in obedience to an alarm, he found that the engine had already gone. Twenty-five cents was the fine for coming "direct from home without his FIRE-CAP," and for not coming to order "when called to order from the Chair." Fifty cents was

the fine for absence from a regular or special meeting of the company, and twelve and a half cents for not answering to his name at roll-call, "except he be within sight of the Engine House during the call," though "sickness or death in the FAMILY is a sufficient excuse to clear him of the above fines." If he left the meeting without first obtaining leave of the chairman, he was fined fifty cents. "No POLITICS," reads Article 12, "shall be introduced at any meeting of this Company. Any member being found guilty of the same, or of improper behavior, using indecent language, profane swearing, or being intoxicated with liquor during business, or at any time when the COMPANY is together, shall pay a fine of ONE DOLLAR." Article 18 enjoins that "when the engine is under way each man shall drag at the rope, and not shove at the ENGINE unells [*sic*] absolutely necessary, under the penalty of TWENTY-FIVE cents, the Foreman and Assistant excepted"; and Article 20 makes it "the duty of every member of this COMPANY to report such Chimney as he knows to have been on fire within forty-eight hours after his knowledge of the same to the FOREMAN or one of the persons appointed to receive the same under the penalty of ONE DOLLAR." As early as the 6th of November, 1794, the fines collected at the annual meeting of company Thirteen, at Hunter's Hotel, amounted to £3 1*s*., there being twenty-three members present.

IV.

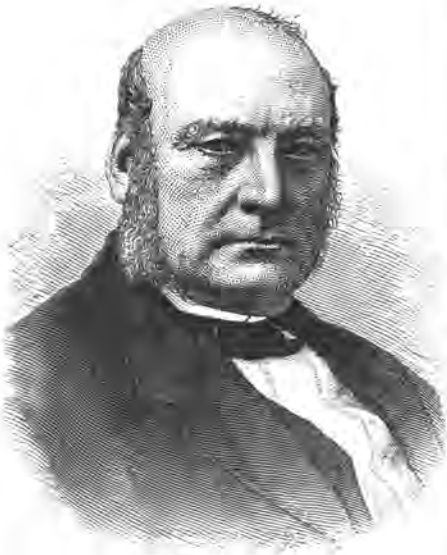
The first Chief Engineer of the old Volunteer Fire Department was Thomas Franklin. He was a fireman forty-one years, and a Chief Engineer thirteen years, having been appointed to that office in 1799. He was known among the firemen by the affectionate sobriquet of "Uncle Tommy," and had the reputation of being careful of their lives and health, never giving them an order to enter into danger where he did not lead them. At the time of the great fire in Chatham Street, while attempting to pass from one street to another, both sides of which were swept by flames, he was overcome by the heat, and his clothes took fire. It was necessary to drench them at once by a discharge of water from one of the engines, and the chief was taken home in an exhausted condition. When the Common Council had resolved to issue fractional currency, during the war of 1812, Mr. Franklin was appointed to sign the notes. Millions of dollars' worth received his signature. Having been nominated to the office of Register of the City and County of New York, he was supported by the firemen,

THOMAS FRANKLIN.

and triumphantly elected. During the last visit of General Lafayette to this country, Mr. Franklin was the Chief Marshal at the grand review of the Fire Department in honor of the city's illustrious guest, and received from him the most hearty congratulations.

Among certain manuscripts left by the late Mr. Philip W. Engs, an old fireman, who about twenty years ago was in the habit of reading occasionally before the Association of Exempt Firemen some reminiscences of the old Volunteer Fire Department, I find a quaintly told story of the famous Chief Engineer and one Johnny Ling:

"About this period [1817] there was a personage who chose to identify himself with the Fire Department, familiarly known as Johnny Ling. He was rather weak in intellect, had one blear eye, carried his head one-sided, and walked with a peculiar shack gait. Johnny believed that we were deficient in our appointments in the Department, and so appointed himself 'captain of the leaders.' The firemen in the neighborhood of Broad Street encouraged the whim, and procured him a fire hat with his title painted thereon, and a constable's staff painted in like manner. Thus prepared, you might see him trotting up and down the lines, ordering every one off the leaders [or hose]. He had a fondness for something



CARLISLE NORWOOD.

stronger than water, and often by the time the fire was well under he would be in a trim for sport, and the boys would excite him by treading on the hose, when he would apply his staff to them, and a general *mêlée* was produced, in which Johnny would be moved about with rather uncomfortable rapidity. On one occasion our venerable Chief, Thomas Franklin, who loved pleasantry, stepped on the hose within sight of the 'Captain.' Some roguish fireman told the latter there was a fellow on the leaders. He turned around, exclaiming, 'Get off the leaders, you sir.' 'I won't,' was the prompt reply. 'Then I'll knock you down,' he rejoined. 'Don't you see that I am the Chief Engineer?' said Mr. F. 'I don't care for that; I am the Captain, and you sha'n't stand there. You ain't fit for Chief Engineer if you do so. Come off there.' Our good Chief replied, 'Thee is right, Captain, and I'll obey thy orders. I charge thee to see hereafter that everybody is kept off.' 'There,' says Johnny, 'don't you see that the Chief obeys the Captain? Now, boys, give me some gin.'"

Mr. Eng adds his tribute to "the distinguished character" borne by "our venerated brother Thomas Franklin. There are many now [1858] living who knew that noble philanthropist, and who will remember him to have possessed an influence over the Fire Department, and to have commanded a respect from its members, which has been the lot of no man before or since his day."

Mr. Carlisle Norwood, formerly foreman of Hose Company No. 5, now President of the Lorillard Insurance Company, being asked, "Upon what part of your life as a fireman do you look back with the greatest pleasure?" replied: "Upon the whole of it. I thought there was nothing like being a fireman. I would sooner go to a fire than to a theatre or any other place of amusement. There was no pleasure that equalled that." During his time of service the families of the first citizens were represented in some of the companies. To No. 14 Engine, for example, were attached as volunteers Bishop Hobart's son William, Dr. Hosack's son Edward Pendleton, Mayor Paulding's son Frederick, and Frederick Gibert, now a prominent resident of Fifth Avenue. Many highly respectable Quaker families —the Macys, the Townsends, the Jenkinses, the Haydocks, and others—belonged to the Department, a chief motive for joining being the consequent exemption from the military duty to which they were conscientiously averse. Then, too, many leading merchants were glad to be rid of jury duty. A well-known merchant once served on a jury for fourteen consecutive days, though allowed to go home in the morning, in charge of a deputy-sheriff, to change his shirt and to shave. The sheriff in those times was wont to pick out solid and good men for that service, and such men liked to escape liability to it by entering the ranks of the firemen. Another merchant served three weeks. Apart from these motives were the native love of excitement, and the honorable instincts of loyalty to the city. In 1820, when only eight years old, Mr. Norwood was at the Park Theatre fire, which he remembers distinctly, after the lapse of sixty years.

He remembers also the little tripartite keg hung in front of the engine, marked, "Spirits—Rum—Gin," each word standing over its appropriate compartment. The steward of the company had charge of this keg, and dispensed its contents at fires. In the later days of the Department the intemperance was a crying evil, and as long ago as 1812 the trustees of the Fire Department Fund were moved to ask Company 13 how far, in the latter's judgment, "the important duties of a fireman ought to be committed to men addicted to habitual intoxication."

The famous "Gulick affair," he says, has never been correctly related in print. The Common Council, eight years previously, had caused many resignations of firemen

on account of the way in which that legislative body had treated John P. Bailey, the treasurer of the Department, and the foreman of Twenty-three Engine. Bailey had been insulted by an alderman, had been drawn into an altercation with him, and had in consequence been dismissed the force without a hearing. The memory of that indignity was fresh in the minds of the firemen at a fire at Avenue C and Third Street in 1836, when the news was circulated that the Common Council had removed Chief Engineer Gulick. The fact was that at a caucus it had resolved to remove him, but the protests of his friends had induced it to reconsider its action. The fire was at its height, when one of the firemen, Mr. Hubbs, who had heard of the first action of the caucus of the Common Council, but was ignorant that they had reconsidered the matter, went up to the Chief, and exclaimed, "Boss, your throat is cut!"

"It isn't possible," replied Gulick.

"Yes, it is," persisted the first speaker; "the Common Council have deposed you."

Gulick at the time was wearing the broad back rim of his hat in front, so as to shield his face from the heat, as was often done at fires. He withdrew a few steps, and then walked down the line silently and gravely, without changing the reversed position of his hat. His demeanor drew the attention of the firemen, one of whom asked the Chief what was the matter.

"I am Chief no longer," responded Gulick; "the Common Council have removed me."

Instantly the news was passed up and down the line, and almost before the appropriate comments had begun, the firemen were taking up their hose and stopping the playing of their engines. Only one company—No. 8—continued throwing water upon the burning buildings, and its hose was cut several times in succession. Gulick meanwhile had retired to his office in Canal Street, and word was sent to Mayor Cornelius W. Lawrence that the conflagration was progressing without hinderance. The situation had become truly alarming, and the safety of the whole city was imperiled. A messenger was dispatched for Gulick, and in a few minutes the late Chief, as the firemen believed him to be, though in reality he had not yet been deposed from the office, was seen walking through the ranks, a fireman on each side of him grasping him by the arm.

At Gulick's solicitation, and upon his assurance that he had not been removed, the firemen resumed their labors, and by-and-by succeeded in extinguishing the flames. Soon afterward, however, Gulick was deposed in earnest, and a general resignation of firemen took place. John Ryker, Jun., who succeeded him as Chief, was a handsome, active officer of commanding personal appearance, and, next to Gulick, the most popular fireman in the city. If he had not accepted the appointment in the circumstances in which it was offered him, he would have been the firemen's choice for that office. But he became at once exceedingly distasteful to them, in spite of his great executive abilities and rare personal worth, and during the next year had a very hard row to hoe. He was succeeded by that admirable officer Cornelius V. Anderson. Gulick in the mean time had been put in nomination for the office of Register, the firemen having gone first to the Democrats, and then to the

JOHN A. CREGIER.

Whigs, who acceded to their desires in the matter, and under whose banner he was triumphantly elected by a majority of 6050, although the Whig party was in a minority. The excitement had been almost unparalleled in intensity, and the electioneering wild. One Sunday morning, for example, the worshippers at St. Patrick's Cathedral, on returning home, were greeted with placards that read:

"Who saved the Cathedral?
James Gulick.
Vote for him for Register."

That gallant fireman John A. Cregier, whose distinguished services as foreman

GEORGE W. WHEELER.

and engineer in the old Volunteer Fire Department have told severely upon the vigor of his once most vigorous constitution, was asked the other day whether, if he could live his life over again, he would choose to repeat his experience as a fireman. "Yes, I would," he replied, emphatically; "I would go it all over again. I have often been asked that question—whether, with my present knowledge, I would choose to relive my life as a fireman. Yes, sir, I would. The sight of a fire—the first kindling of the flames in the distance—used to make me glad. I never stopped to think of the misery and destruction that it was causing. My father used to whip me enough to break any boy's heart, and his back too, because I would run with the engine. But it was of no use. What part of my experience as a fireman do I remember with the greatest satisfaction? A great deal of it. Our engineers' meetings were always a source of great pleasure to me; our engineers' and foremen's meetings too, and our meetings of representatives at Firemen's Hall. After the regular business was disposed of there was invariably something lively to attend to; there was always some one to offer a resolution, and open an inspiriting discussion. There was old Harry Mansfield—'Resolution Mansfield' we used to call him, because he always had a resolution to introduce—how much fun he made for us! The representatives of the Department in those days—say thirty years ago—were high-toned men, men of standing, character, and ability, men like Major Wade, Carlisle Norwood, David Milliken, Zophar Mills, Peter H. Titus, John S. Giles, James Y. Watkins. Norwood used to make those walls ring with his eloquence whenever any matter came up affecting the reputation of the Department."

George W. Wheeler is the secretary of the Association of Exempt Firemen. He is as familiar with the history of the old Volunteer Fire Department as any other member, living or dead. As soon as he was big enough to run at all he ran with an engine, and on the 9th of February, 1836, joined Engine Company No. 41. After serving five months he resigned, together with nearly all the other firemen, on account of the removal of Chief Engineer Gulick by the Common Council. In May, 1837, he rejoined his company, upon the election of Cornelius V. Anderson to the position of Chief Engineer. The several companies, at the time of their resignation, had indignantly removed the ornaments from their engines, and in some instances scratched and otherwise injured the paint and pictures. No. 13 had repainted their machine a dull lead-color in order to indicate their indignation. No. 41 had disfigured their machine by frequent scrapings, so that, when the Gulick trouble was over, an entire repainting was necessary.

Mr. Wheeler had some serious accidents during his term of service as a fire-

HARRY HOWARD.—[FROM A PAINTING IN THE CITY HALL.]

man. On one occasion (in 1839) he slipped while about to take hold of the brakes of the engine, was caught under them, and severely struck on the shoulders and across the back. The blow laid him aside for some weeks. About two years afterward he was run over by a hook-and-ladder truck. In 1843, while holding the pipe at a fire at Attorney and Rivington streets, he was ordered to climb over a pile of mahogany logs. The logs tumbled over him, and so badly bruised him that he tried to resign from the company, but the company would not let him. Subsequently he joined the Exempt Engine Company, and was chairman of a committee to negotiate with the insurance companies in reference to receiving from them a steam-engine. The Exempts were the first to agree to try a steam-engine; but while they were making their arrangements, Company No. 8 pushed matters in a similar direction, and won the distinction of being the first New York fire company to use steam.

The last Chief Engineer but one of the old Volunteer Fire Department was Harry Howard, who still lives, his left arm paralyzed, and his health otherwise much impaired. He holds an office connected with the Department of Public Works, and is a familiar figure in the region of the City Hall. He was fifty-eight years old on the 20th of August, 1880. Harry Howard does not know who his father or mother was. A kind-hearted old woman adopted him in infancy, and the Legislature, at his request, gave him his name. While a Chief Engineer, and on his way to a fire in Grand Street, he was suddenly stricken down, in his thirty-fifth year, by an attack of paralysis, which left him permanently crippled, after twenty or more years of most active service as

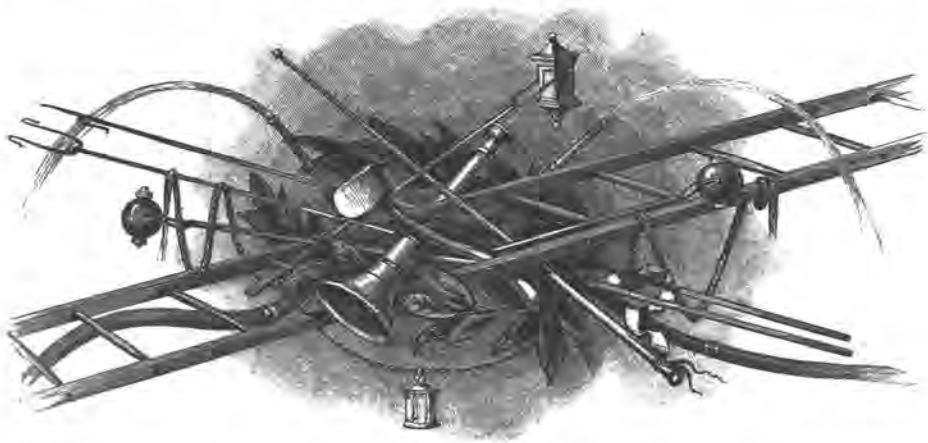
"runner," fireman, foreman, assistant engineer, and Chief, during which he had been the *beau ideal* of the "boys" in the lower wards of the city. His portrait is better known than that of any other old fireman in the city of New York, Tweed's excepted. Asked recently upon what part of his life as a fireman he looked back with the most satisfaction, he replied, quickly and emphatically: "Upon none of it. See this arm of mine [paralyzed and stiff] That's all I can do with it [lifting his shoulder up and then dropping it]. That's what I got for being a fireman. What can compensate me for that? Nothing. And there was many a man who went to an early grave in Greenwood on account of overexertion as a fireman. Look at the paid firemen to-day. They ride to a fire, and they ride from it again, and they have horses to draw their engines. There's nothing to destroy their health. They are as likely to live long as any other men. But the old volunteers endured the most exhausting hardships in the snow, in the rain, the cold, and the heat, dragging their machines block after block, lifting the heavy hose, running themselves breathless—and all for what? They never got even thanks. All the reward they received was to be accused of joining the Department in order to steal and pillage at fires."

"There was some drinking in the Department, I confess," he continued, "although I never could see that the firemen drank more than the militia did or do now. Getting drunk was not more characteristic of a fireman than of a soldier, and it is a mistake to suppose that it was. But firemen were continually overexerting themselves: men who had wives and children would kill themselves by overwork, and leave their families helpless. Three years before the Paid Fire Department was organized I said that we ought to have it. I was tired of seeing so many good men throw their lives away."

"What did they do it for?"

"I never could understand it, and I don't understand it now. Nobody ever thanked them for their services. Look at my arm—that's all the return I got. There's John A. Cregier, the best man the Fire Department ever produced—the very best man, the finest specimen of a fireman—he's sick too. Overexerted himself, that's all, and now he's suffering for it. We were burying men all the time who died from the same cause. I said that it ought not to be. I was in favor of a paid Fire Department. A volunteer Fire Department is well enough in a village, but not in a city. Yet I notice that with all their facilities—with their telegraphs, their horses, their riding, and their steam—the paid firemen don't get to a fire as quickly as the old volunteers did."

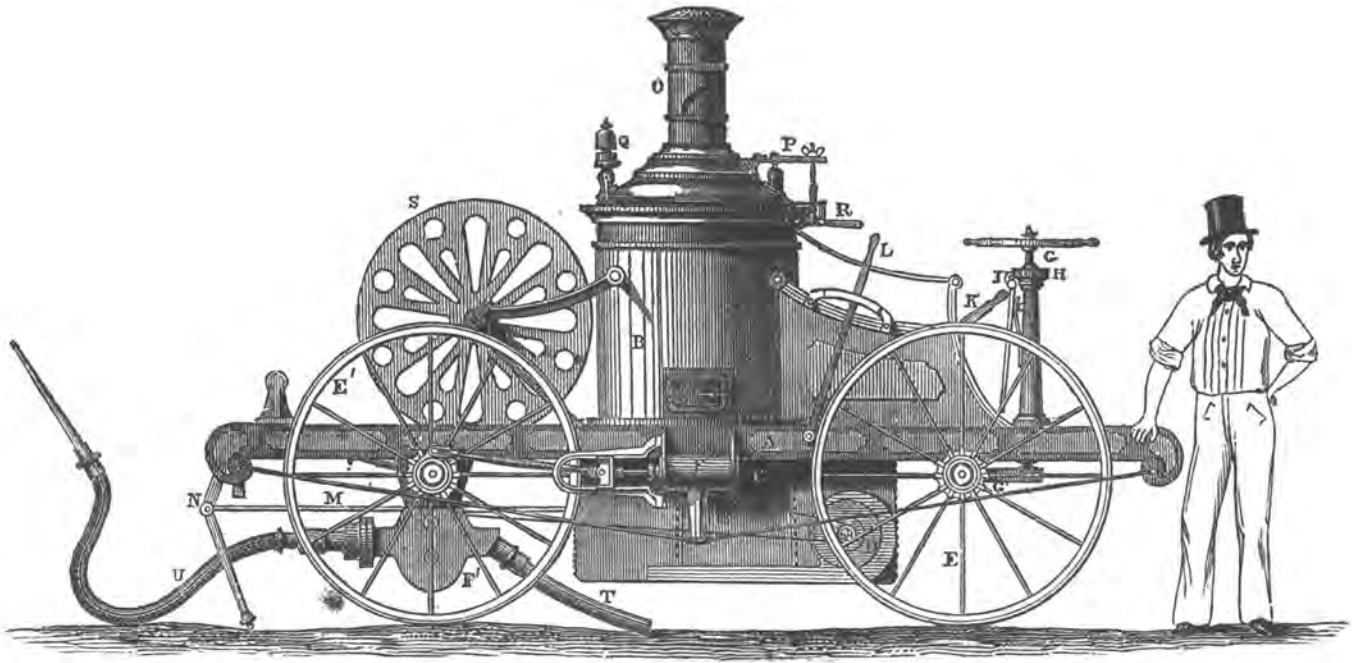
Harry Howard was Chief Engineer for three years. He was an extremely dashing, athletic, and brave fireman. Nothing gave him keener pleasure during the seven years of his assistant engineership than to succeed in outstripping his Chief, the late Alfred Carson, while running to fires, in arriving there before him, and in reaping the consequent reward of being temporarily in supreme command.



Scientific American.

NEW-YORK, OCTOBER 25, 1851. [NUMBER 6.

STEAM AND GAS FIRE ENGINE.



The accompanying engraving is a view of a steam and gas engine for extinguishing fires, invented by Mr. William L. Lay, of Philadelphia, who has taken measures to secure a patent. It is intended to be the fireman's friend, by doing the severe work and requiring attendance only. It is so constructed as to propel itself to fires, and to work the pump when there, by the rotary motion which drives the wheels, while the wheels by a contrivance are made to act the part of flys.

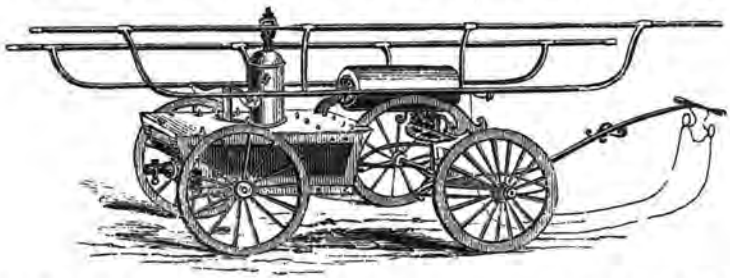
A is the truck frame; B is a strong steam tubular boiler; C is the water tank for supply of boiler, and D is the blower for the fire. E E′ are the wheels; F is the steam cylinder, and F′ is the pump to throw water on the fire; this pump is a rotary one, and occupies but a small space. T is the suction hose, and U is the discharge hose with the nozzle on the same; G and G′ is the steering gear; it consists of a wheel above having a vertical shaft with a pinion on its lower end gearing into a segmental rack to guide the wheels, and make them turn easily. H is a circular head with indentations round it to receive the catch rod, I, which is pressed into the indentations by a spring below, to keep the pinion of the steering apparatus secured from moving as required. K L are levers; P is the balance on the valve; R is the lever for operating the valve of the steam whistle, Q. A is a telescopic smoke-pipe which can be elevated or lowered at pleasure; S is the hose carriage. M N exhibit a combination of levers to raise up the back wheels off the ground when the machine is set to working; to do this, the attendant operates the lever, L, which draws back the rod, M, and acting upon the joint, N, lifts forward the support below, which raises the back wheels, F′, and holds up the back end of the engine, thereby allowing the wheels to act the part of fly wheels to the crank of the piston rod. The rotary pump has two cog wheels, like Stewart's engine, and they are driven by cog gearing attached to the inside of the axle of the driving wheels—this gearing is not represented, but to those acquainted with mechanical devices, the mere mention of it is enough. The engine is operated by a lever to open the throttle valve in the usual way.

When the engine is standing in the engine house, the boiler always contains a sufficient quantity of water to get up steam, and at the same time is charged with carbonic acid gas by suitable apparatus, until it contains sufficient to work the engine for ten minutes in which time steam can be raised to take its place, when exhausted. The kindling and fuel is laid in the fire box ready to be ignited in an instant. When an alarm of fire is given, the engineer mounts his seat, and by opening the throttle valve, the engine will instantly propel itself in the direction of the fire, while at the same time the kindling in the fire-box is ignited, and the blower being in motion will raise steam in time to work the engine before the gas is used up. When the engine arrives at the fire, by merely choking the fore wheels, and pulling the lever connected with the standards, the hind wheels will be raised from the ground, and act as fly wheels when the rotary pump is put in motion by letting on the steam. The pump will force three or four hundred gallons of water one hundred and fifty or two hundred feet high per minute, which will extinguish any ordinary fire in a very few minutes. It is intended to use two 3 horse-power engines to do the work. The whole will weigh about one and a half tons. The Philadelphia councils are considering the propriety of having one built for the use of the city, and it is probable they will appropriate a sufficient sum for that purpose.

The inventor wishes to sell an interest in the invention to a party or parties who will introduce it into our cities.

E. B. JUCKET,

No. 7 HOWARD STREET, NEW HAVEN,



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LONG AGO BOOKS
from
Americana Review

The Country Kitchen, 1850

Automobiles of 1904

American Advertising, 1800-1900

Mail Order Fashion, 1880-1900

Early American School Books
(Choice pages from)

Uncle Frank's Animal Stories

1890's Album

Old Fashioned Picture Book

Mother Goose of Boston

The Volunteer Fire Dep't
of Old New York

The ABC Coloring Book

Railway Passenger Travel, 1825-1880

Locomotive Advertising in America, 1850-1900

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The only Genuine article that can be obtained without subjecting the purchaser to a prosecution and fine,

Which in a few months turns to Slate or Stone, protecting whatever covered from the action of the weather, and from fire.

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It has not been two years since the first counterfeit was got up; nothing, therefore, can be known of its weather-proof qualities. Whereas mine has been in use more than six years, and is now as firm as stone. I have a certificate at my office from more than twenty of the first men in Ohio, which says that there has been such a complete failure in all kinds of stuff got up and sold for Fire Proof Paint, except Blake's, that his only was considered worth using.

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